

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 03834 190929Z

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7148

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONGEN JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3834

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR IS PLO XF

SUBJECT: FONMIN ALLON COMMENTS ON SOVIET BASES,
PLO, SYRIA-JORDAN RAPPROCHMENT

1. DURING JUNE 16 AIRPORT CONVERSATION, FONMIN ALLON TOLD CHARGE AND POL COUNSELLOR THAT HE HAD VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND REPORTS ABOUT SOVIET ARMS AND BASES DEAL WITH LIBYA. TOGETHER WITH HTE ESTABLISHMENT OF IMPORTANT SOVIET BASE AT BERBERA SOVIETS WERE ACHIEVING MAJOR NEW FOOTHOLDS IN MEDITURANEAN AND RED SEA WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVED THEIR STRATEGIC POSITION AND, HE THOUGHT, CORRESPONDINGLY WEAKENED THAT OF US. ISRAELIS WERE ADDITIONALLY CONCERNED BECAUSE OF CLOSER TIES DEVELOPING BETWEEN QUADDAFI AND PLO REJECTIONIST FORCES; IT WAS HARDER FOR GOI TO
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 03834 190929Z

DISMISS THE "MADMAN" WHEN THERE WAS POSSIBILITY

THAT "WORST" OF PLO MIGHT BE HAVING GREATER INFLUENCE ON GOL DECISION MAKING. WHEN IT WAS SUGGESTED THAT THE EGYPTIANS MIGHT TAKE VERY DIM VIEW OF AN EVOLUTION TOWARD A SOVIET-DOMINATED LIBYA, ALLON HALF SERIOUSLY SAID THAT IF THE EGYPTIANS OR ANYONE ELSE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE LIBYAN REGIME THEY NEED NOT FEAR AN ADVERSE ISRAELI REACTION*

2. JORDAN AND THE PLO. ASKED FOR HIS VIEW ON IMPLICATIONS OF REPORTS OF SOME RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN SYRIA AND JORDAN, ALLON SAID IT POSED CERTAIN OBVIOUS PROBLEMS, E.G., IN THE MILITARY AREA. NEVERTHELESS, HE THOUGHT IT ALSO MADE THINGS DIFFICULT FOR THE PLO--IT INCREASED JORDAN'S BARGAINING POWER AND REDUCED THAT OF THE PLO. ONE RESULT, HE THOUGHT, WOULD BE THAT IT MIGHT FORCE A SPLIT IN THE PLO WITH THE ARAFAT FACTIONS ATTEMPTING TO REACH SOME KIND OF AN AGREEMENT WITH HUSSEIN AND THE REJECTIONIST FRONT BREAKING OFF, PERHAPS HOPING TO PICK UP FROM LIBYA WHAT THEY MIGHT LOSE IN SUPPORT FROM SYRIA. IN THIS CONNECTION, ALLON REMARKED THAT EVEN IF A PLO SPLIT RESULTED IN SOME MODERATION OF PLO POLICIES, A NEW "REJECTIONIST FRONT" WAS BOUND TO GROW UP TO REPLACE THE OLD ONE. HE THOUGHT THAT GEORGE HABASH, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD NEVER CHANGE HIS MIND.

3. ALLON ALSO COMMENTED VERY ENTHUSIASTICALLY ABOUT HIS TRIP TO RUMANIA. ALTHOUGH THE CONVERSATION WAS CUT SHORT BY THE ARRIVAL OF THE PRIME MINISTER, ALLON EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR RUMANIA'S STEADINESS IN RESISTING VERY GREAT PRESSURE OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS FROM THE SOVIETS, THE YUGOSLAVS AND THE ARABS TO ABANDON THEIR POSITION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNITION OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL AS A PREREQUISITE TO POLITICAL PROGRESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE SAID

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 TEL AV 03834 190929Z

THAT THE RUMANIANS HAD INSISTED ON THEIR POSITION AND HAD NOT GONE SOFT. THIS, HE SAID, WAS ONLY ONE OF A NUMBER OF MUTUAL INTERESTS--APART FROM ALL THE GENUINE AND SERIOUS DIFFERENCES--BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. WHATEVER THESE DIFFERENCES MIGHT BE, ALLON CLEARLY APPRECIATES THE ISRAELI-RUMANIAN CONNECTION, AND COMMENTED SEVERAL TIMES ON THE WARMTH WITH WHICH HE HAD BEEN RECEIVED IN

BUCHAREST.
VELIOTES

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